AN APOLOGY For, and an INVITATION To, the PEOPLE call'd QUAKERS, TO Rectifie some ERRORS, which through the *Scandals* given they have fallen into.

WHEREIN

The true Original Causes, both Humane and Divine, of all the *Divisions* in the *Church*, and *Mischiefs* in the *State*, and among the *People*, are plainly and briefly opened and detected.

LONDON,
Printed for the Author, 1697.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THAT *whole Bodies or Societies of Men are subject to the same Infirmities, which the Individuals, of which they consist, are, and often Sick of the same Diseases, and the very worst of all, those of the Mind*, Blindness, Conceitedness, Perverseness, Obstinacy, Incorrigibleness, *and* Impatience *of* Reproof, *or even* Friendly Admonition, *the Experience of all Ages doth abundantly manifest; but in none is it more manifest, than in the People of the* Jews, *whom God raised up to be an* Example, Admonition, *and* Warning, *to the rest of Mankind. Their whole* History, *and all their* Prophets, *are Testimonies of this all along from first to last, and of this height of the Disease to be most offended and enraged against their best Friends, such as most earnestly desire, and most faithfully seek and endeavour their Good and Recovery; They reckon them their Enemies, who tell them the Truth*, Isa. 29. 21. make a Man an Offender for a Word, and lay a Snare for him, who Reproveth in the Gate, *that is, publickly, for National Sins, and those of the Great Ones.* Act. 7. 52. Which of the Prophets

have not your Fathers Persecuted? *saith Saint* Stephen. *Besides this common Infirmity, it is very observable, in the unhappy Divisions which are now among Christians, that generally in all, there is a greater Zeal and concern for their own Church or Party, than for the common Interest of Christianity, and the real Service of God, and Salvation of Souls. And this being so, What Entertainment is such a Discourse as this like to meet with in the World? But if it be considered for what End, and for whose Service it is written, that may be sufficient for Encouragement to the Author, and for Caution to the Reader, how he treats it. And that, with the Lesson now to be read,* (Decemb. 18.) *may serve for sufficient Advertisement,* Isa. 50. 7, 8, 9. The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my Face like a Flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me, Who will contend with me? let us stand together: Who is mine Adversary? let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me, Who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a Garment: the Moth shall eat them up.

Some things but briefly mentioned here upon this occasion, which may seem doubtful or obscure, are intended, upon another more proper, to be more fully explained and cleared.

AN

An Apology for, And an Invitation to, The PEOPLE call'd QUAKERS.

To rectifie some ERRORS, which through the *Scandals* given, they have fallen into, &c.

ALmighty *God* doth in many things *govern* the greater Collective Bodies of *Men*, as he doth the lesser of Families, and single Persons; and therefore what is the *Duty* of single Persons, or of the Heads of Families, under several occurrences of the Providence of God, the very same is the *Duty* of the Governors of those greater Bodies, whether they be Civil, or Ecclesiastical. And therefore again, as when any Cross or Affliction befalls a Person, if he have any Sense of God and Reli-

gion in him, he ought not to neglect it, as an insensible Creature, or a brute Beast; nor to look upon it, as a meer Accident and Misfortune, like an Atheist or Infidel; but to acknowledge the Hand and Providence of God in it, examin himself, and consider well for what intent or purpose, it may have been ordered or permitted by the Righteous, Wise, and Gracious Overruling Providence of God, and without delay apply himself to do and perform what that Dispensation doth appear to him to call for.

When *Divisions, Schisms, and Separations* of Parties do fall out in a Church, these are such Afflictions, as ought to be looked upon, as the Loss of one in a Family, or of a Member in a particular Person; and therefore not to be made light of, or passed over as Misfortunes and Accidents, but to be well considered, as ordered or permitted by the Special Providence of God, with great Justice and Wisdom, and therefore for some special End to be inquired into, taken notice of, and observed by his Church, that they may thereupon apply themselves to what he requireth of them for his Service and their own Good. When this is neglected, all other Means usually prove not only ineffectual, but productive of more or greater Evils.

What was written afore-time, was written for our Admonition and Instruction: and as we are plainly told, that in the Division and Separation

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of the *Ten Tribes* from the House of *David*, *the Cause was from the Lord*, 1 Kin. 12. 15. so in that great *Division of the Eastern and Western Churches*, and breach of Communion between them; and in the Western Church that great Division and *Separation of all those Churches*, *call'd Reformed*; and in the great Division again amongst them into *Lutheran and Calvanist*, and the several *Sub-divisions* of several Parties and Sects amongst them; and lastly, to come nearer home, in all the Divisions, Sub-divisions, Sects and Parties, which have separated from *the Church of England*, and afterward one from another, there is as certainly the Hand of God, and did we consider it well, we might plainly see that the Cause is from the Lord.

This we can all see in the Great Division, and Separation of all these Churches call'd *Reformed*, from that of *Rome*; but she her self either cannot or will not see it: And this, to say no more of the Foreigners here, our Dissenters at home think they see, and do see; but we of the *Church of England* do not see, or will not see, to any purpose as we ought. But as they of the *Church of Rome* lay all upon the *Heretick*, and will acknowledge nothing amiss among themselves; so we of the *Church of England* lay all upon the *Separatists* and *Dissenters*, but will acknowledge nothing amiss among our selves. And that which dazzles the Eyes, and blinds the Minds of Peo-

ple in both, is chiefly the Pomps and Vanities of the World (which are renounced at *Baptism*) without, and the God of this World, who blinds their Minds, within. The things of this World, to Earthly-minded People, are like Sugar-Plumbs to Children, which stop their Mouths, and satisfie them that all is well with them.

But if things were more narrowly looked into, it might be perceived, That there is scarce any Party of Separatists or Dissenters, that hath not something of *Truth peculiar* to them; and that there is something in particular *amiss* in the Church, which gave *Occasion* to that Separation, and whereof something peculiar in that Sect may serve for Admonition. And therefore, that in all there is a secret *Providence of God*, ordering or permitting them for Judgment, Correction, Reproof, and Admonition to reform, unto the Church, and unto those very Parties, in which any such Division and Separation hath been made. But generally all they, who should have taken the Admonition, have had their Mouths so stopp'd, and been so bribed and enchanted with the Devil's Sugar-Plumbs and Baits of Preferments, that while all was so well with them, as they thought, they could see nothing amiss in the Church, but magnified it, as a most glorious Church, and layed all the Fault upon the *Dissenters* and *Separatists*, who

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they thought only wanted what they were poſſeſſed of; and the Scandal of their Ambition, Pride and Coveteouſneſs, and Neglect of a due Care of Souls hath, by their Preaching, I doubt, betrayed more Souls into the Snares of the Devil, than all their Preaching hath reſcued out of them, and throughly converted unto God. It is *a ſad Truth*, but Truth it is, and a Great one too, and very manifeſt to all, whoſe Eyes are open. That our *Univerſities*, and Church *Preferments*, which were deſigned by our Pious Anceſtors, for the promotion of true Piety, as well as Learning, are, by the Subtilty of Satan, and Neglect of true Piety and Devotion to God, become very ſubſervient to the Kingdom of Darkneſs, leſs to the Kingdom of Light: From which corrupt *Fountain* hath proceeded, one way or other, not only all our *Druſions*, but moſt of all the *Evils*, which do now afflict either the Eccleſiaſtical or Civil State; and if ſome very good Care be not ſpeedily taken, more and greater yet are more like to enſue, than theſe be removed.

Of all the Sects which have ſprung up amongſt us, there is none more conſiderable in this reſpect, whereof I am ſpeaking, or leſs conſidered as it ought to be, than that of the QUAKERS, as they are abuſively called, begun by GEORGE FOX, a young Man, born of mean, but honeſt and religious Parents, at *Drayton* in *Leiceſter-ſhire*, in the Year

of

of our Lord 1624, and educated from his tender years in the Fear of the Lord, but to no more Humane Learning than only to read *English*, and write indifferently. He was in his Youth disposed to Virtue and Piety; and when upward of Nineteen *retired* from his Relations and Acquaintance, and *lived* in divers places, *where he was not known*, working at his Trade of a *Shoe-maker*, with his hands for his Livelyhood, but exercising his Mind in serious Meditations, both while at his Work, and at other times of Leisure especially. In the Year 1646. he understood, That *University Learning* was not enough to qualifie Men to be Ministers of Christ; and thereupon, instead of hearing them, used to *retire* with his Bible *into Solitary places*, joyning neither with the Ministers of the Church, nor with the Dissenters, but relying wholly upon the Lord Jesus Christ for his Inward Teaching. At another time he understood, That God, who made the World, did not dwell in Temples made with Hands, but in his Peoples Hearts. And in the Year 1647. having been for some time exercised with Temptations and Troubles in his Mind, he came farther to understand, *That all was done, and to be done, in and by Christ*; and, *How he conquers and destroys the Tempter*. And some time after he went among the Professors at *Duckenfield*, & *Manchester*, and *declared Truth* (as he calls it) amongst them, and also at *Broughton* in *Leicester-*

Leiceſter-ſhire, and *Mansfield* in *Northampton-ſhire*; and then People came far and near to ſee him. And here his Preaching ſeems to have commenced. And in 1648. were divers Meetings of Friends in ſeveral Places. And this was the Beginning of that Sect, which is now become ſo conſiderable in outward Appearance, and I wiſh more conſiderable in a true inward Power than it is. For as all Man-kind are apt to relapſe and ſink down again from the Elevation to which God at any time raiſed them; ſo I doubt are this People now relapſed very much into a Form, only of a different ſort and appearance.

The Beginning of *George Fox* ſeems to have been by and under a true Divine Conduct; ſuch as *Abraham* was led by; ſuch as *Moſes* was driven by from the Court of *Pharaoh* into the Wilderneſs; and ſuch as the Holy Prophets of Old, and greater numbers of Holy Chriſtians afterwards, were partly led, and partly driven by into the Wilderneſs, Solitary places, and Retirement from Relations, Friends and Acquaintance; as our Saviour ſaith, to forſake Father and Mother, Brother and Siſter, and Houſe and Land, for his ſake: and in thoſe Retirements he did receive *Openings*, as he calls it, of Truth indeed: and when he came from his Retirement, and went into the Meetings of Profeſſors, he did *declare Truth* indeed, as he expreſſeth it. For

it is a certain Truth, that University Learning, that Preaching and Praying at Churches, or elsewhere, that the Studying of the Holy Scriptures, that the Profession of Faith in Christ, the Use of the Sacraments, and most frequent and constant use of the great and chief Solemnity of the Christian Worship; nay, even Zeal for Christ, and doing Miracles in his Name, and Reliance upon his Merits, are all, though good in their kind, and very necessary, and some absolutely necessary; yet are all short and deceitful to those, who rest in them, and seek not in all and above all, that inward Principle of Light and Life, which is Christ in them, who receive him in Sincerity and Purity, and retain it by faithful and ready Obedience to his Conduct.

This *George* saw very well and rightly. And if he did, in the heat of Disputes, either through Transport, or any humane Infirmity, or through the Subtilty of Satan getting any Advantage of him, over-shoot himself, it is no more than what *Luther* and *Calvin*, and the rest of the Reformers, have done; who, whether they have reformed or deformed most, may very well bear a Dispute; and he and his Party deserve to be pitied, and helped out by gentle and kind means. And great *reason* there is *for it*, upon two accounts at the least. 1. Because the Scandals given were the occasions of their Errors. 2. Because Christianity having before been pull'd to pieces, and

no where compleat, intire, and clear from Corruptions and Abuſes to be found in any Church or Party of People in the World, they of all the parts choſe the better, the Soul, leaving the Body, as a dead Carcaſs to the reſt.

It is true, this is in a great Meaſure to be imputed to thoſe, who by their Empty Formality gave the Occaſion; yet it was a Fault in Them, who took ſuch Offence at it. What God hath joyned together, Man muſt not preſume to put aſunder: If the *Leaper* be commanded to waſh in *Jordan*, (2 King. 5. 10.) he muſt not think that to waſh in the Rivers of *Damaſcus* will do as well: If the *Blind Man* be commanded to waſh in *Siloam*, (Jo. 9. 7.) or even *Moſes* to caſt up Aſhes into the Air, (*Exod.* 9. 8.) the Command muſt be obeyed and obſerved, or the Effect ſhall not follow: If People be commanded to be Baptized in the Name of the *Lord Jeſus*, that their Sins may be forgiven, and that they may receive the Holy Ghoſt, (*Act.* 2. 38, 41.) if they preſume to neglect and cavil at the Command, their Sins are more like to be increaſed and faſter bound, than forgiven, and they more like to receive Satan transformed in a Spirit of Deluſion, than the Holy Spirit of God; and to die in their Sins, though with many falſe Comforts, than to come to true Reſt in the Lord, in any other way than he hath preſcribed. God's Command, if it be but the forbearing of an Ap-

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ple, (*Gen.* 2. 17. 3. 3, 6, 11.) or the doing that which our Reason cannot understand, must be observed punctually. Disobedience to the Wisdom of God, is no less a Sin than Disobedience to his Will. And therefore I dare not excuse this People in this; for their Sin may be greater, and their Case more dangerous, than they or I can imagin: but I cannot but pity them, be ready to help them, to hope the best, because they were led into it, and did it through Ignorance, Prejudice, and the Scandals of others; and to speak comfortably to all that will receive it, and submit to *the Call of God*, humble themselves before Him, and return to their Duty. But the Sin of those, who shall refuse, and go on obstinately, will be greatly aggravated, and their Case more dangerous and difficult. If they fall into the Ditch, the company of a blind Guide will not save them: If they die in their Sins, it will be but a sorry Comfort to them that their Blood must be required of another.

But to help them out, I know no better and more effectual way, than to detect the Snare and Stratagem whereby they fell, and the Stone at which they stumbled. And it was no other than what I have mentioned already in general, the *Scandal* given by others, and *Offence* taken by them: but it will be necessary to consider it more particularly: and the first particular, that I observe in the Journal of *G. Fox*, was an empty

Formality

Formality void of the Power of Godliness, that he perceived and felt in all Parties, the Professors as well as the Priests, as he calls them: that they were Ministers not of the Spirit, but of the Letter only, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. that their Preaching was but with Wisdom of Words, 1 *Cor.* 1. 17. with the inticing Words of Man's Wisdom, *ibid.* 2. 4. or at best but a Ministration of the Letter, not of the Spirit. (I do not write his Words, but his Sense.) And this was an undeniable Evidence, and Demonstration of the insufficiency of *University Learning* alone (alone I say) to qualifie Men to be Ministers of Christ; for there were of both sorts, those who wanted not that, if that had been sufficient: And if we inquire into the true reason of that, how that comes to pass, since a principal End of our Universities is to qualifie Persons for that Service, we shall presently discover that, which is the Root, and true Cause, both of that, and of almost all the Unhappiness of this Nation; and that is a great Defect, and *Neglect of Teaching and Learning the best and chief part of all Learning and Knowledge*; of true Heavenly Wisdom. Their Learning is plainly such an ineffectual Learning, which doth deceive their Souls, being void of the chief solid Food, like Chaff without the Corn, and Husks without the Kernel: it stops the Mouth, satisfies the Stomach, but famisheth the Soul: and not only so, but, like unwholsome Food, breeds

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only Wind & Crudities, a Knowledge that puffeth up, and Diseases, superficial Notional Dulness, without any thing of true Culture and Food of Souls; a Form plainly without the Power; such a Cheat and Deceit, as the most virulent Expressions of any called *Quakers*, could not exceed: but even Indignation would extort almost as much from a sober Man duly sensible of it. It deceives themselves; it deceives the People whom they undertake to feed; and it deceives the whole Nation.

The Teaching here is agreeable to *the Design of those who come to learn*; a mist Design of an unnatural Composure, Heaven and Earth, or rather Earth and Heaven; not so much God and Mammon, (which, according to our Saviour's Doctrine, are inconsistent) but Mammon and God; for the principal in the Design in this Case ought first to be named: and it is visible in their Actions which that is; and even in their Common Expressions: for if one propose a Place with all the Advantages of doing Good that may be, presently comes this filthy fulsome Question; *But what Encouragement is there?* as if an Advantage for doing Good was not Encouragement enough to a Christian to enter into the Service of God, without some humane assurance of I know not what temporal Income. And Preferments are not only thought, but plainly asserted to be the *Encouragements of Learning*;

ing; and I doubt they have their Reward. What *insatiable Greediness* is observable generally in all, to be scandalous in almost the best, that can come at them! And what is the Use they make of them, when they have with great Study, and Pains, and Solicitations, and Compliances, and Flatteries, and Costs, at last obtained them; but Pride, and Luxury, and Extravagancies of Wives, and Children; to which all * That must be sacrificed, which was designed for Provision for true Food of Souls; of which Thousands are daily famished, for want of a competent number of duly qualified Labourers in the Lord's Vineyard, in the great Parishes about this City, and other parts of the Nation, where there is Maintenance enough, if such Persons were employed, as did indeed make that their Business, Care and Concern. All their Learning raiseth but few above the Sensual, to the Animal State; but none to the truly Spiritual: if any attain to that, it is by such Means as may be used any where else, as well as at the University, as things are there ordered at present; and not by University Learning, which, as it is ordinarily used, doth more hinder than further it. Nor is it likely it should have much better Effect upon others, which hath no better upon themselves. For in the Spiritual Generation, as in the Carnal, Men beget their like; the strong, such as are strong; and the weak and infirm, such as themselves are.

* v. Fa. Paul, Of Matters Beneficiary, N. 236, 237. &c. *A Sin to spend that which exceeds the indergent Necessity of a Clergy-Man.*

But if we look farther into *the Concerns of the whole Nation*, and their Duty to their Great Master in that respect, are not they to be both severally and jointly, not only Pastors, but Watchmen, severally over their own particular Charges, and jointly over the whole Nation? But what an insignificant Generation are they, even the Chief of them in that respect, not only far short of the Generosity and Magnanimity of genuine Christians, and the more immediate Servants of the Great Jehovah, but even of the natural Genius of their own Nation; as if their *Preservers* had some Narcotick and stupifying quality, or some secret Enchantment in them: And so in truth they have; they are like the *Trojan Horse*; when they think they have got a great Prize, they themselves are surprized and captivated by; they little think what invisible Enemies When they return to the Pomps and Vanities of the World, which they had renounced in their Baptism, they desert the Heroick Christian State, and enter into the Power of their Enemy; and their true Christian Strength departs from them: they have no longer any real Strength to serve the Lord Christ, but only such an Appearance of it, as serves to deceive themselves and others; and make them the more effectually subservient to that Interest which they do not design to serve: for their *Actions and Behaviour* render their *Preaching* not

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only ineffectual, but scandalous to Men, and ridiculous to the invisible adverse Powers, who are not a little gratified with the spectacle of it. It puts a Slight and Contempt upon the great and noble Examples of our Saviour, and the Ancient and most Heroick Christians; but spreads the Devil's Snares, and decoys Men into them; promotes *Christian Idolatry*, which is Covetousness, to be as effectually destructive as any of the *Jews* ever was, or any of *Papists* can be; and tempts the World to believe, that either Earthly-mindedness, or to mind Earthly things, is consistent with Christianity, or that they are no Christians, and do not themselves believe what they Preach unto others.

But to speak a little more distinctly, there are *two things to be consider'd in our English Clergy*; what they have originally from Christ, and what they have originally from Man. From *Christ* they have Authority to preach the Gospel, to teach and instruct the People, to administer the Sacraments, and offer to God the solemn Prayers of the Church, to admonish, correct, and execute Ecclesiastical Discipline, where there is occasion, and to receive the Oblations of the People for maintenance of themselves, and for Pious Uses; and a right to all the Respect and Submission which is due to the Ministers of Christ in so Holy an Imployment. And from *Man*, they have Houses, and Lands,

and Revenues, and Titles, and Honours, and Civil Power and Authority, and Charges and Incumbrances. And these are some good and useful; and some evil, pernicious, inconsistent with their Christian State; and, to be plain, Antichristian. The Houses, Lands, and Revenues may be of good use, if they be used as they should be; but the rest are Antichristian, under pretence of Honouring, Degrading; and under pretence of enlarging their Power with what they had not, debasing and abridging what they had, and subtilly enslaving the Ministers of Christ to be Servants of Men; and not the outward Man only, but their very Minds and Spirits. And here lies the very *Mystery of Iniquity*. They are deprived of one part of their Christian Authority, and their Hands bound, under pretence of State and Grandure, by having Chancellors, like the Grandees of the World. They are subjected to the State by their Acceptance of their Honours and Dignities from thence, (the very Temptation that was offer'd by the Devil to our Saviour, and a betraying of the Rights of the Church of Christ.) And the Papal Enchroachments and Usurpations being transferred to the Crown, and all Ecclesiastical Preferments coming from the King, this is first a *Bait* to allure Ambitious Minds, and then an *Enchantment* upon them, that they dare not displease

the Creator of their Grandure, though for the Service of their true Lord and Master, and the Saviour of their Souls. So that we are like to have a continual Succession of Flatterers of Princes, instead of faithful Monitors, to become the Servants of the great God to be; and Nurseries of false Loyalty, instead of true Piety and Devotion to God; and of Instruments of incessant Dissentions between Prince and People, instead of Healers of our Breaches; a just Judgment or deserved consequence of Sacriledge and Usurpation upon the Church of Christ. And here, if I be not much mistaken, lyeth *the Root of all the Unhappiness of this Nation*, and at this time in particular.

The Providence of God hath not at any time been wanting to us; but we have been always wanting to our Duty to Him, and to our own true Interest. And though all have been wanting, yet the beginning of this deficiency hath been in them, who should have better attended to, and wisely consider'd the Motions of Providence, and been the first active vigorous Movers to the rest to have corresponded with it: But, alas! they attended more to the Motions of Men, and to please them, or at least not displease them, for their own Advancement or Security; and this is call'd Prudence forsooth: And so have we lost a most favourable Opportunity put into our hands. When Men

turn from God to Men for Counsel, or Assistance, or Advancement, that Divine Power which doth ordinarily accompany the Ordinances and Orders of God, doth usually depart from them, though chosen, or regularly commissioned by him; as it did from *Saul*; And then they are ready to fly to any mean things for support or safety.

The *Church of England* hath been in *Bondage*, under the *Civil Power*, ever since it was discharged from the *Roman* Usurpations, which were not totally abolished, but too much reserved to another Master; and a *Slavish Spirit* hath ever since possessed it. It did quietly acquiess in the greatest *Sacriledge* that ever was committed: It contentedly suffer'd the most solemn part of its *Liturgy*, composed by *English* Bishops, and, as was declared by Act of Parliament, by the aid of the Holy Ghost, to be *dismember'd, disorder'd, and defac'd*, and the Christian Sacrifice abolished by Foreigners, and a Factious Party, which have ever since been Thorns in their Sides, without the concurrence of the *English* Clergy. The true Christian *Discipline* they never had the Courage to attempt to restore, though an Office was prepar'd for a Memorial, with a Wish to have it restor'd, from the beginning, which King *Charles* II. observing upon an *Ash-Wednesday*, ask'd, *Why do they not restore it? Who hinders 'em?* And

for

for the *Worship* of God, we have ordinarily only Mattens and Vespers, and that too only on the Lord's-Day, and in that too the Prayers short and deficient, either to excite, or to express the Devotions of the People, where there is any; and besides all this, what we have, commonly read with so little Devotion, as gives Scandal to many, and no little disturbance to others. And our very *Sacraments* and most Holy Things, no less than Holy-Days, are scandalously prophaned. *Baptism*, which is the Solemnity of our engaging in the Christian Covenant, not only permitted, but even forced upon such as do not desire it, either for themselves or their Children, but bring their Infant Children either for fear of the Apparator, or out of Custom to be like their Neighbours, without any sense or understanding of so much of the Christian Religion as was required anciently of Catechumens, before they were admitted to *Baptism*. And that other Sacrament, the *Holy Memorials of our Saviour's Passion*, which, from the rising of the Sun to the setting of it, that is, all over the World, hath, in all Assemblies of Christians, for the solemn Worship of God, till the last Age, been presented before God, as a solemn Recognition of our Redemption by Christ, and Subjection to him as our Lord, hath been not only most shamefully neglected, and so treated, both

in Sermons from the Pulpit, and in Printed Books, that it appears few amongst us rightly understand it at this day; but most horribly profan'd, not only by common admittance of all that will to it, but even forcing the most wicked and profane Officers to it, upon the Penalty of losing their Places. And so unhappily have some of our Controversies with *Papists* and *Fanaticks* been managed, and so superficially and impertinently our Preaching been generally throughout the Nation, that we have disputed one part, into disbelief of the Scriptures and Infidelity; another, into contempt of one of the chief Principles of Christianity; and generally all, into Neglect and Contempt of the Examples, Precepts, and Counsels of greatest Perfection in the Christian Religion; and together with that, preached the People generally into a careless tepid state of Indifferency; so that in the Country especially, it is rare to meet with two or three good sensible intelligent lively Christians in a Parish. And who of our principal Clergy can deny any of this? And if it be all true, why is it not reformed? If they cannot reform all, why not as much as they can? Why is not the *Christian Worship* restored in their Cathedrals? And if those be so burden'd by prophane Officers imposed upon them, that they fear to expose it, why do they not reform their own Families, and restore it at least in their

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own Chappels? What Account will this Glorious Church, as carnal Flatterers call it, give of their Neglect of Propagating the Gospel in Foreign parts, at least in our own Plantations, and suffering them to be such Nurseries of Scandals to the Infidels? What Account of the many things fit to be done at home, for the Service of their Master; and fit to be considered by them jointly in a Body, and promoted in Parliament; which yet are neither studied, nor considered, not so much as thought on by any of them, no more than if they did not belong to their Care, or were not of any Concern to their Master, though they sit Session after Session in the Parliament? But how can it be expected that they should ever extend their care to things so remote, who take no more care of what doth concern them in their own Chappels and Families?

It is an amazing thing for one whose Eyes are open, to consider these things. But it fairs with collective Bodies of Men, as with single Persons: they are subject to the like Diseases: the State of this Church is plainly a Tepid, Scorbutick, Latitudinarian, Laodicean State, quite sick of the Prudentials; and has been so in a manner from the first Settlement of the Reformation. And to speak freely, as becomes an honest Man, though there was great need of a Reformation, when it was begun by *Luther*, and long before; yet hath that great Work been so ill managed,

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with more of the Antichristian than Christian Spirit; that I cannot see, by any growth in Grace and Virtue, that the Blessing of God hath ever been with it; only he seems to have preserved these Reformations rather as Judgments and Corrections for the Obstinacy of that Church which would not reform: and raised up and preserved the several Sub-divisions of Parties amongst us for the very same cause and purpose. *For the True Cause of all the Divisions and Separations amongst us*, is no other but our Scandals, Abuses and Corruptions; both by way of Natural Causation, and by the special Judgment of God, to awaken us, if it be possible. And though the Blessing of God, the true Spiritual Christian Blessing, be not upon them, because he doth not favour *Schisms* and *Divisions*, yet is his Protection over them, as his Instrument in the Nature of a Judgment, and in some thing to raise an Emulation in those of the Church, if they would lay it to heart and understand it. For there is none of them all, but there is some thing in them, which may serve for Admonition and Notice of something amiss in the Church. This which I have now said, may be of use not only to them of the Church, but also to *the several Separate Parties*, and deserve the very serious and deep Consideration. For it is not a light matter *to Make a Schism or Division* in any particular Church, or in the Catholic Church

Church. It hath been looked upon, in all Ages, to be a *damnable* Sin: and who ever doth well consider the several weighty Admonitions in the Scriptures concerning it, if he have not a benumm'd Conscience, will not make light of it; nor yield to plausible pretences: there is nothing so bad, but the Wit of Man and subtile Suggestions of Satan can put a colour upon it; nor so good, but they can misrepresent it and disparage it: but it is dangerous and very imprudent to play tricks with Sacred things. Any thing else may be more safely medled with in that manner.

This does concern them all in general; and I must add a word or two more: There are none of the best of them, that I have yet talked with, that could or would deny that their Party was much sunk in Piety and Virtue from those degrees of it, which was in those before them of the same Party. And this being so, it concerns us all to consider well, whether the *Apostacy* foretold be not an Apostacy in Practice, as well as in Principles? and, Whether, while we are gazing to see the Judgments of God upon it abroad, it may not be found amongst us at home; and we feel, in a surprize upon the Nation at home, what we expect to see elsewhere, at *home*; as was upon this City in *sixty six*. And certain I am, that there are not only *Antichristian Principles* amongst us all, but whole *Antichristian Sects and Parties*, which, deceived by the Subtilty

tilty of Satan, under the most specious appearances of the most pure and refined Christianity, do undermine and enervate the true Genuine Christianity, and the Power of Godliness. It is one of *the Devils* most subtile *Policies*, by abuse of Scripture, and mis-application of certain Truths, to impose upon People, and overturn them. So he began with our Saviour, and so he goes on with Professors to and at this day. The Holy Scriptures are abused, the Honour of God is abused, the Merits of Christ are abused, the Guidance of the Spirit is abused, the Moderation and Condescention of the Gospel is abused, and whatever is most Excellent and Admirable is abused by the Subtilty of the Enemy, and the supine Negligence, and Inconsiderateness and Folly of Men. And woe be to them who dare presume to be the Instruments and Leaders in these Abuses and Doctrines.

It is certain that our Saviour gave Instructions to his Apostles for the Settling of his Church; and that they accordingly in all places, where there were a competent number of Converts, did ordain Elders, and gave Authority to others to do the like; and so settled a *Succession* in the Church, which hath continued all over the World to this day. And it is certain, that the State of the *Jews* was so corrupted in his time, as provoked the Judgment of God upon them, so that they are a Monument thereof all over

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the World to this day; and yet neither He, nor his Disciples, did ever refuse communion with them, till they were cast out; and so far was he from allowing them to separate, that he foretold their being cast out of the Synagogues, as part of the Persecution they were to suffer. It is also certain, that our Saviour did foretell that many false Prophets, *that is*, false Teachers, should come in his Name, and deceive many; and gave great Caution not to go out or believe them; and that his Apostles did the like, and did with great earnestness exhort all to beware of Divisions, Schisms, and Separations in the Church: And accordingly, in all Ages, for Men to take upon them the Office of Elders or Ministers of the Gospel, without a Regular Ordination, derived by Succession from the Apostles; or to draw away people after them, and engage them in Separate Parties, hath been looked upon as a heinous Sin; and whoever have done so have been Infamous in the Church ever since. And therefore, if our Dissenters did continue daily with one accord at our Temples, as the primitive Christians did, and did continue their Assemblies at their own Meeting-places, for Instruction and Edification, without any Separation from the Church, provided there was nothing but true Christian Doctrine taught amongst them, I do not see but they might be of very good Use, and deserve not only an Indulgence, but Encou-

ragement from the Publick Authority. But they, who make a Trade of it to engage Separate Parties, I do verily believe have much to answer for before God: and those who desire to be Christians indeed, had need to beware of them. And this I must in justice say, after all I have said concerning what is amiss amongst us, that, thanks be to God, we have those amongst us, who, for good Learning, for profitable Preaching, and for sincere Piety, Devotion, and all Virtue, are no way inferior to any of the Dissenters, if to be equalled by any of them: and yet I cannot say they are so many, but there may be reason enough to receive those Labourers also into our Lord's Harvest. And I heartily wish it was well considered, How they may be made more serviceable in so important and needful a Work, without any thing of a Separation: and that they would consider, Who They are, who sit in *Moses*, or rather the Apostles Seat, and, What our Lord doth require in that respect.

And now, to come more particularly to the PEOPLE of that Party call'd *Quakers*, I must first acquaint them, that I have not only had several *Conferences*, with the Principal Persons of their Party, whom they call *Ministers*, but have also sent them several *Letters* and *Papers* to their Second Days Meetings: And as our Conferences have hitherto been managed in a very friendly manner, so I do desire to proceed

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in the same manner with them also: and therefore what is directed at first only to the second days Meeting, I shall desire them now to receive, as intended from the first for them all, though I thought it most fair and decent to proceed in that order. And it is as followeth:

To William Penn, *and the rest of the Friends with him, at their second days Meeting in* Grace-Church-Street.

William, and the rest of the Friends with thee,

MY Hearts desire and Prayer to God for you all, is, that ye may be saved: for I am perswaded that you have a Zeal of God, at least many of you, though not according to Knowledge in some things. Nevertheless, whereto ye have attained, in that I desire ye may be established, and that God will be graciously pleased to reveal the rest to you, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing. For which purpose I come, I trust, by the Grace of God, with a Message of Grace and Peace to you. I am well satisfied that it is no meer Humane Project or Artifice, that at first raised you up, and hath conducted you hitherto: but a Supernatural Power, and that it is of the Lord some way or other, (as was the Separation

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of the Ten Tribes from Rehoboam, 1 King. 12.
for Correction and Reformation of something amiss
in this Church. And therefore I dare not presume
either upon my own head, or by my own Ability, to
intermeddle in it. But my Heart is inlarged to-
wards you upon these Considerations: 1. That
ye do assert one of the Great and Chief Principles
of the Christian Religion, which I have observed
to be very unworthily and even despitefully treated
by too many, who have gotten into, or seek, Prefer-
ments and Imployment in the Church, without Check
or Reproof; and so unworthily deserted by most
for fear of reproach, or disgrace, or hindrance in
their Preferment, that I have not known it gene-
rously asserted by above two or three in the Pulpit
(but those great Men indeed) though it be plainly
a Doctrine most authentickly and solemnly professed
and declared in the Church of England. 2. That
ye do bear a good Testimony against other Abuses
connived at, or tolerated amongst us. 3. I am
moved with Pity towards you, that you should have
so great Causes of Offence or Scandal given you
against the Holy and Established Institutions and
Ordinances of Christ, for the Ministerial Office, for
the Admission of Profelytes, and for the great So-
lemnity of the Christian Worship, which hath been
so long abused with Controversies, that I know very
few Persons now amongst us, who do rightly and
compleatly understand it; and even against the
Person, Satisfaction, and Merits of Christ himself.

But

But when I consider your Notions and Sentiments concerning these things, though I am well satisfied that you are under the Conduct and Energy of some Spiritual Power; yet, What that Spirit is? *and,* Whether One or Divers? *in my Judgment, doth deserve very good Consideration. To know what Spirit it was, which God sent between* Abimelech *and the* Shechemites, *Jud.* 9. 23. *and what that was, that was sent from the Lord to* Saul, 1 *Sam.* 6. 14. *and what that was, that was commissioned by God in the case of* Ahab, 1 *King.* 22. 22, 23. *and what that was, in the midst of the Princes of* Noph, *Isa.* 19. 14. *which was from the Lord too. And that such a Spirit hath been among some call'd* Quakers, *is manifest both by their Actions, Speeches, and Writings; nay, the very Spirit of the Devil, and of Antichrist, is apparent and undeniable, from the Indignities offered both in word and deed, to Holy things. But that is not the thing now to be considered, what Spirits may have appeared among them. For even among the Apostles, Satan had power to enter into* Judas; *and it is not improbable but those, whom our Saviour told,* Ye know not what Spirit ye are of; *and even* Peter *himself, when our Saviour said to him,* Get thee behind me, Satan, *might not at the time be free from some Impressions of Evil Spirits. That, 'tis likely, was a Peculiarity of our Saviour's, for the Prince of this World to have nothing in him. But the thing to be considered, is,* What Spirit

that is which at first excited, and hath now the Conduct of the whole Body of this People? *And, not, whether it be sent, or commissioned from God?, but,* Whether *it be* one of the Ministring Spirits *sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation?* or, One of those Seducing Spirits, *to whom, in the latter times, that some would give heed, was in the times of the Apostles, expressly said by the Spirit of God?* And great Reason there is to take this into very deep Consideration: 1. Because of the many and weighty Cautions given by our Saviour and his Apostles, and left upon record in the Sacred Scriptures, for our warning in these latter times, to beware of them, and not to go out after them; with Admonitions concerning their Subtilty, their Energy or Power, and their strong Delusions to deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect; and that even Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light, that is puts on the Appearance of an Angel of Light (2 Cor. 11. 14.) and, lastly, that we should try the Spirits, (1 Jo. 4. 1.) 2. Because, if the Tryal be by Agreement or Disagreement with the Doctrine, Institutions and Ordinances of Christ, and his Apostles authorized by him, they may seem to have apostatized and gone off, or, at least, fallen short of them, in matters of great Moment, and special Concern, those before mentioned; and therefore to be Seduced by some Spirit of Error. For I doubt not but the Devil himself hath the

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Malice and Envy against the Man Christ Jesus, by whom he hath been Conquered and Vanquished, and against the Solemn Memorial of that Victory, that could he but keep people from engaging in that Holy Covenant with Him by Baptism, and from the Solemnity of that Memorial, he would be willing himself to lead them into all other Truth, upon that condition, rather than fail. Yet notwithstanding, since they are a Sober People, have received, retained, and do act upon one of the chief Principles of Christianity, and have divers commendable things in them; and what Errors they have fallen into, have been occasioned by the Scandals and Offences given by those of the Church, who will have a sad account to answer for it? I do hope in the Mercy and Goodness of God, that if it be a good Spirit, which hath the Conduct of them, he shall lead and dispose those who are Sincere amongst them, to the acknowledgment of the Truth in those things, whereto they have not yet attained; and if it be otherwise, he shall be forced to resign the Conduct of them to a more powerful and better Guide; and that we shall see such a Society of Compleat Christians *come out of this despised People, as are at this time hardly to be found in any part of the World, that I know of. These are my Thoughts, and Hopes concerning this People in general at present. And Hopes, I say, grounded upon the Mercy of God, and Power of God, which no Good Being would oppose; nor no Evil Power can stand before. And in His Name I come*

unto you, knowing assuredly that neither I, nor any Humane Ability, is able to prevail against the Power that is amongst you, notwithstanding the Certainty of the Truths that I have mentioned already, and shall endeavour, by the Grace and Assistance of God Almighty, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, more fully to explain unto you in due time: But, as I said, if it be a good Power, it will favour me and assist me in it, and rejoyce in it too: and if it be an Evil Power Commissioned, it must cease, and submit to that Victorious and All-Conquering Name: Its Enchantments must be dissolved, and its Sophistry and Falacies detected. I therefore, as an Ambassador of Christ, in the Spirit and Meekness of Christ, beseech you, Be ye reconciled to the Truths of God, and receive them with that Reverence and Gratitude that is meet, without Cavelling, or regard to any Temporal concern. I do not invite you to return to the Abuses and Corruptions which you have forsaken, but to those Truths, and to the due use of those Holy things, against which you have been Scandalized by those Abuses and Corruptions. Nor do I invite you to dissolve your Society, or to leave off your Meetings, and drown your selves in a promiscuous Multitude. No, you have in part born a good Testimony, and I would have you do so still: But I invite you only to make your Testimony more Compleat, Illustrious, and Irrefragable, by bearing your Testimony to the whole Truth; and not any longer a Testimony like the Feet

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of Daniel's *Image, partly ſtrong, and partly weak, by a mixture of Truth with Falſhood; for that cannot ſtand long together; but to ſtrengthen the things that remain, and ſet in order the things that are wanting, that ye may ſtand; for otherwiſe ye will certainly be Broken to Pieces. I invite you but to what I am doing my ſelf with a ſmall Company of Poor people, that is bearing a Teſtimony for God, and manifeſtly under his Conduct: But it is neglected by them, to whom it hath been offered for a ſufficient Time, and in a ſufficient Manner, conſidering their Learning, and pretence to Knowledge: And now it is offered to you, a deſpiſed People, that God may humble the Proud and High-minded, and confound the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, by mean and deſpicable things, in the ſight of Men. Be Wiſe, and neglect not the Opportunity, and you, who were laſt in the Worlds account, ſhall be firſt. What ever you do, you will find there is ſolid Truth in the Propoſal, and I wiſh you may receive it to the Honour and Glory of God, and your own Comfort and Salvation; and you will then find me to have been*

Your Sincere and Cordial Friend,

E. S.

31 *Aug.* 1696.

After this there were other Letters and Papers sent, which may be taken notice of hereafter, as there may be occasion; but the last contained *certain Questions*, which I think fit now to propose to the Consideration of all, who are sincere, and do desire not to deceive themselves, nor be deceived in a matter of so great Importance, as the Will and Service of God, and the Salvation of their own Souls. If any notwithstanding will presume to go on in any false or Erroneous Ways, they must answer for it, and their Blood, if they miscarry, must be upon their own Heads. For *the Design and Use of these Questions* is, to examin the case, What Spirit they are of? the Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of Antichrist; the Spirit of Truth, or some subtile Spirit of Delusion? Whether they be Christians indeed, or counterfeit Christians, *that is*, Antichristians? Whether Hypocritical Professors in Words, but Renagadoes in Deeds, refusing the Solemnities of his Covenant and Worship, and the Orders of his Church, or such sincere Christians as are ready to follow the Guidance of his Spirit out of their own Wills, and out of their own Wisdom and Imaginations, and Errors and Mistakes, into all Truth? and, Whether they be in the Way of Salvation, or of Delusion and Perdition? *The Times of this Ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all Men every where to Repent.*

QUEST.

QUESTIONS PROPOSED To the People call'd QUAKERS,

First to their Ministers, at their *second days* Meeting; and now, to them All; for the better Examination, and rectifying some *Errors* and *Mistakes* amongst them.

I. WHether there be not a great Party of *fallen Angels and wicked Spirits*, which are Enemies to Mankind, and with all the Power, Activity, and Subtilty they can, do continually endeavour to hinder their Salvation, and Communion and Union with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

II. Whether *the Word*, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, was not *made Flesh* and dwelt amongst Men, being born of

the Virgin *Mary*, and called *Jesus*, which signifies a Saviour, and *Christ*, the *Messiah*, the anointed of God, and *Jesus Christ of Nazareth*?

III. Whether *his Appearance* in Mortal Flesh was not *to destroy the Works of the Devil*, the Prince of that Party of fallen Angels and wicked Spirits; to be a Prince and a Saviour to Mankind, and the Certain of their Salvation to all who receive him, and subject themselves intirely to his Teachings by his Example, and by his Doctrine and Precepts, and Orders recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and by the Motions of his Holy Spirit upon and in their Hearts and Minds?

IV. Whether he be not the *Only Mediator* between God and Man, so that Man can have no Communion with the Holy God, or Participation of the Spirit of Holiness, but by and through Him?

V. Whether that Party of *fallen Angels and wicked Spirits*, knowing this, do not above all things *endeavour*, by all means, *to withhold people from closing and uniting with that Holy Mediatour*, and to withdraw as many as they can as much as they can from Him?

VI. Whether *their most dangerous and subtile Actings* in this Opposition be not principally, *by Way of Deceit*, under the Appearance and Pretence of Good to Man, and of Good Spirits?

VII. Whether it hath not been fore-told, that, in the latter times especially, there should be many

many *false Teachers*, who, with such specious Pretences and secret Energy, should endeavour to draw away People from the Faith, as to deceive, if it was possible, the very Elect; and Warnings given to beware of them, by Christ and by his Apostles?

VIII. Whether *the Spirit of God* and *the Spirit of Christ* be not the same, and a Holy and Pure Spirit, a Spirit of Truth and Righteousness, leading into all necessary Truth, and from all Fraud, Deceit, and Falacy, Cavils, and shuffling Evasions?

IX. Whether it be not reasonable *that Christ Jesus*, who had done so much for Man, should *prescribe* what Manner he pleased for his Peoples engaging with Him, and for their recognizing Him, and making their Solemn Address to the Father by Him; and what Orders he pleased and would have observed and continued in his Church?

X. Whether *to oppose* such Appointments, Prescriptions or Orders, *or to cavil* at them, seek Evasions or Pretences to neglect them, and yet pretend to be Christians, be not a great Evidence of Insincerity, and of a subtile Antichristian Spirit of Satan transformed into an Angel of Light?

XI. Whether Jesus Christ, besides his General Command to his Apostles after his Resurrection, to go to the *Gentiles, and teach all Nations*,

tions, *baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, &c. did not for *forty days* shew himself to them, *speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given Commandments unto them, and in or with those *Commandments* give them sufficient *Instructions and Direction* for the Constituting his Church, which he purchased with his Blood?

XII. Whether the *Apostles* did not in all things *faithfully pursue* his Commands and Directions?

XIII. Whether besides his express Commands and Directions they did not also *receive the Holy Spirit*, according to his Promise in an extraordinary manner, and had the same *residing in them*, and *manifesting his Presence* with them, by extraordinary Operations, to guide and assist them in their Work?

XIV. Whether they having received the Command to make Disciples in all Nations, (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) baptizing them, as aforesaid, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them, did not in all places preach the Gospel, exhort the People to believe and be *baptized*, and baptized with Water those, who did believe, though baptized before with *John's Baptism*, and though they had received the Holy Spirit, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*?

XV. Whe-

XV. Whether the Apoſtles, and the People converted by them, after they had received the Holy Ghoſt, did not, when they came together in one, or aſſembled for the Solemn Worſhip of God, *break Bread*, and *eat the Lord's Supper*, and do as their Lord did, and commanded them to do; and that ſo conſtantly, that there is none known any Aſſembly of Chriſtians in the time of the Apoſtles, nor in many Ages after, to have been held for the Solemn Worſhip of God without it?

XVI. Whether the Apoſtles did not *ordain Elders*, and appoint others, by ſpecial Appointment, to do the ſame, in every City, by ſuch Authority, that none did preſume to take the Office of *Elder* unto himſelf, but who was ſo ordained; or the Office of *Ordaining Elders*, but who was ſo appointed, either in the times of the Apoſtles, or afterward, but who have been infamous ever ſince?

XVII. Whether ſeeing that our Saviour himſelf, though he needed not, would notwithſtanding be baptized with Water, to fulfill all Righteouſneſs, and thereupon had ſenſible Approbation from Heaven, did alſo by his Apoſtles baptize with Water; and that it is plain by their Practice, that his Apoſtles, and the whole Church of Chriſt, did underſtand his Command to baptize all Nations, of Baptiſm by Water, and as neceſſary for Forgiveneſs of Sins; and that Baptiſm

tism with the Holy Ghost was peculiar to himself: whether, I say, this being so, it be not a forced and strained Interpretation, without any sound ground, and contrary to the most authentick Means of explaining Words, to restrain that Command to Baptism by the Holy Ghost only?

XVIII. Whether, if such Construction be by any Spirit more than humane, it be not the Spirit of Antichrist or Satan transformed, to withhold Men under his own Dominion, from solemnly ingaging with Christ, and from Forgiveness of their Sins in his Name? or, If it be only by Opinion of Men, such Opinion obstinately persisted in, be not a Damnable Sin, contrary to subjection of all Imaginations to the Obedience of Christ, and subverting of Souls, and such Teachers to be abominated and anathamatized by all sincere Christians, as Seducers, and the Ministers and Instruments of Satan, though they appear in Sheeps cloathing?

XIX. Whether, it having been the constant belief of all Nations, (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) that they had a real, though Spiritual, Communion with the Gods they worshipped, in their Participation of their Sacrifices, as St. *Paul* intimates, 1 *Cor.* 10. and may be proved by good Authority; and Christians duly disposed, having a like Communion with Christ in the participation of the consecrated Bread and Cup, as St. *Paul*

Paul affirms; and the ſolemn Worſhipping of God, by preſenting our Prayers to the Father, with thoſe Memorials of our Saviour's Paſſion, being plainly a Recognition of our Redemption by Chriſt, and of his Dominion over us, acquired by his Paſſion, and that that is the only Propitiation, and He the only Mediator, by which, and by whom we Mortals born in Sin can have Acceſs to, and Acceptance with the Father; and St. *Paul* having received the Doctrine of what he taught concerning this, from the Lord; and the ancient Chriſtians frequenting this Ordinance, after they had manifeſtly received the Holy Ghoſt: Whether, I ſay, this being ſo, to reject theſe either as Types and Shadows, (which are indeed Antitypes, as the *Grecians* expreſs it, Solemn Memorials, and Senſible Declarations before God, Angels and Men, of preſent internal actions of our Minds, for the greater Manifeſtation and Notoriety of the Fact) be not meer Sophiſtry, Shuffle and Evaſion; or as needleſs, upon pretence that Chriſt is come to them in the Spirit; or of their having the Subſtance; be not to ſet up themſelves in Pride above the Apoſtles and Holy Chriſtians, who had ſo manifeſtly the Spirit of God; nay, above Chriſt himſelf, *viz.* to reject that as needleſs, which he inſtituted as neceſſary; and a plain Evidence of the Subtilty and Deluſion of Satan, to oppoſe Chriſt, and detain and withdraw people from his

Solemn

Solemn Worship, and under the most specious appearance of the Spirit of God, by sensible Motions to things appearing Good, and by False Lights, to corrupt and adulterate them, and get and keep a residence in them, as if it was the Spirit of Christ? Whether such Obstinacy, such Fallacy, in such a Matter, of such Importance in Christianity, and yet so easie to Man, and void of all Exceptions, be not plain Evidence of a Mystery of Iniquity in it?

XX. Whether to deliver those things in the Name of the Lord, as immediately from the Lord, and by his Spirit, which may be plainly perceived and detected to proceed either from a humane Spirit, or a Spirit of Error, be not a great Presumption against the Holy Majesty of God, and a great Scandal to the Holy Doctrine of the Guidance of the Spirit of God, and therefore a double and great Sin; the Sin of the False Prophets of old, and that which in *Germany* formerly, and since in this Nation, raised so great a Prejudice against the Truth?

Upon the perusal of these Questions, it may be supposed that some *Answer* was returned, and therefore some account of that may reasonably be expected; and I should have been glad to have been able to have answered so reasonable an Expectation more fully; but the truth in short is, that eight of the first ten were

answered

answered affirmatively, but the other two were answered indeed, but with Answers not to the Questions: and the other ten remain yet to be answered; but I hope upon due consideration will be answered at last, not with words only, but with deliberate solemn Actions. Nor are my *Hopes* without *rational Ground*. For in the several *Conferences* I have had with them, seven or eight at a time, of the principal leading Men of their Party, they behaved themselves, as became serious considerate Persons; heard patiently and attentively, replyed gravely and calmly, none interrupting either me or any of their own party while speaking; and our Conclusion was friendly, though not altogether agreeing in the same Sentiments. And this is my Ground in respect of the *Persons*.

And for the *Matter* it self in question, That they have been led into Error and Mistake in some things, the due Consideration of these Questions will in a great measure make them sensible. And when, besides, they shall consider by what Means they, who misled the rest, came to overshoot themselves, and fall into those Mistakes, *viz.* through the Scandals before-mentioned, and that common Infirmity incident to us Mortals, to run from one Extream into another; this will farther satisfie and confirm them in the truth of it. And if to these Considerations be added a clear Explication of the Truth, which

which they did not rightly apprehend before this, with the Grace of God, will farther in lighten the Mind of those, who are sincere, and regard Truth more than any temporal Concern with much Satisfaction, *viz.* That Baptizm with Water, and that *Noble Solemnity of the Christian Worship*, are not needless *Types and Shadows* o things past and fulfilled, as they imagin, but So lemn Expressions and Declarations, more com prehensively and remarkably significative than Words, before God, Angels, Devils and Men, o present Acts of the Mind, of what is internally and invisibly at the same instant acted in Spirit the one, of our *Engagement in an Holy Covenant with God in Christ*, by putting off, by Repentance our Pollutions through Sin, and Dedication o our Selves to the Holy Trinity; the other, o our *Recognition* of our Redemption by Christ, by his Death and Sacrifice upon the Cross, and o his Dominion over us, and our Subjection to Him, even to lay down our Lives in Obedience to Him, as he did His in Obedience to his Father which is done by making our Solemn Address and presenting our Prayers to the Father, with the Memorials of his Passion, as the Great Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind, and Participation of those Memorials, being Consecrated not only by a Separation to a Holy Use, but by a real Sanctification through the Spirit of God at the Prayers of the Church, whereby the

Faithful

Faithful have a real and Spiritual Communion with Him, and one with another. This is the pure Offering of the *Gentiles*, foretold by *Malachy*, That it ſhould be Offer'd by them from the riſing of the Sun, even unto the going down of the ſame. And this is the Senſe and Meaning thereof received and retained by the Church of Chriſt all over the World, till *Calvin's* new Notions became received as the Pure Word of God, and made this moſt Sublime, moſt Holy, and moſt Auguſt Sacrament, as it is deſervedly call'd by Dr. *Morton*, be taken in effect for a needleſs Ceremony, or of no great Importance, by others beſides the Quakers, and uſed, or rather neglected, accordingly even to this day. Theſe are the great things in it, which I have now mentioned, but rare to be found in our Books now a days, or heard of from our Pulpits: Nor can it conveniently here be explained as it deſerves. But as to both theſe, what is ſaid before, *pag.* 13, 14. ought to be conſider'd. Theſe things, I ſay, well conſider'd, cannot chooſe but make great Impreſſion upon the Minds of thoſe who are ſincere, and have a due ſenſe of their own Spiritual and Eternal concerns.

But when they ſhall alſo underſtand, That the great Principle of the *Guidance of the Spirit* of God, is not ſo peculiar to themſelves as they imagin, but the conſtant Doctrine of the

Church of Christ in all Ages, and of the *Church of England* in particular, (as I have shew'd in a Discourse of *Mystical Divinity*, and some others under the Title of *Ascetick, or the Heroick Piety and Vertue of the Ancients*,) and notwithstanding the Extravagancies of some inconsiderate Opposers of Fanaticism, asserted by most eminent Men of this *Church*, as the profound Dr. *Cradock*, lately deceased, (who himself told me, he had Preached twenty or thirty Sermons upon that Subject) and others now living; and that there are and have been, before *George Fox* appeared in the World, Persons in the Communion of the *Church of England*, as well acquainted with Spiritual things as themselves; and, by consequence, how little necessity there is of venturing upon the Sin of Schism for that cause: And moreover consider that Christ appointed an *Order of Men* for his Ministerial Office *to succeed in his Church* by an external Call and Commission; and notwithstanding the Corruptions of those who sate then in *Moses's* Seat, would not suffer his Disciples to break Communion with them, or disregard their Authority; and by consequence how dangerous it may prove in the end, for Men to presume to set up Parties, and draw People after them contrary to his Orders, and to continue so to do, after fair Warnings and unanswerable Admonitions to the contrary.

To

To conclude, When they ſhall further con-
ider, how horrid a Sin it muſt needs be to pre-
ume to attribute to the Holy Spirit of God, the
Workings of their own Imaginations, or perhaps
he Subtile Suggeſtions of ſome wicked Spirit
f Deluſion; and to expoſe and ſcandalize the
oly Doctrine of the Guidance of the Holy
pirit, by denying of certain and manifeſt
ruths; and uſing ſuch little Shifts and Evaſions
o oppoſe plain Evidence, as an honeſt and in-
enious Lawyer would ſcorn and be aſhamed to
ſe for his Client: When all theſe things, and
ore that might be obſerved, are well under-
ood and conſidered, why may I not with rea-
on hope that all, who are really ſuch as they
ave appeared, in the ſeveral Conferences I
ave had with them, to be, ſhould anſwer the
nd of my Letters and Queſtions, with more
han civil and kind Words, in real and ſolemn
ctions? Why ſhould I not hope that no pri-
ate Intereſt, nor any Temporal Concern, ſhould
nder them? Why ſhould I not hope, that
nce God hath apparently again concluded all
nder Sin, (which all Parties confeſs of all
thers but their own, and is true of all without
xception) that all ſhould humble themſelves
efore Him, return to mutual Charity one with
nother, and ſubject themſelves, and all their
magination, to his Wiſdom, as well as their
ctions to his Will, to the intent that he may

h ye Mercy upon all? Why ſhould I not hope I ſay, ſince God hath done this, and for th End, that they, if they be indeed partaker of his Holy Spirit, ſhould be the firſt in giv ing Glory to God, by ſuch a juſt and reaſon able Humiliation before his Divine Majeſty and Acknowledgment of our Humane Infirmity if never ſo little left to our ſelves, or but ſtepin aſide out of the Order of his Holy Conduct and ſubject themſelves intirely and readily to a the Orders he hath appointed in his Church No ſober wiſe Man will expoſe himſelf, and lea others into Danger or Hazard, when he ma without any Difficulty or Incumbrance put him ſelf and them into Safety and Security: No will any ingenious Man, if he have committe a Miſtake, ſtand it out and maintain it again a Grave and Judicious Man: Much leſs will an conſiderate Man, who hath any ſenſe of God and regard to his tremendous Majeſty, dare perſiſt in Oppoſing or Diſputing his *Inſtitution* or *Orders*: and therefore I ſhall here conclud this.

But becauſe I have received *certain Queſtion* concerning theſe Matters, but without an Name of any who ſent them, or to whom ſhould return *Anſwer*, though I ſhall forbear t expoſe them, by making them publick; yet be cauſe I am debtor both to the wiſe and to th unwiſe, for their Satisfaction, who are eithe

move

moved with such Scruples, or rely upon such infirm Grounds, I shall return a brief comprehensive Answer to the Eight Questions in these following Assertions.

The *Holy Scripture* of the Old and New Testament is the only *Rule of Faith and Practice*, rightly understood and used: But it is in many Cases only a General Rule, leaving the special Application in some, to all Persons; in others, to certain determinate Persons. And therefore to require Express and Plain Scripture for Faith and Practice in all things, doth proceed from Ignorance and Weakness in some, but too often from a disingenuous Spirit of Contention, a dishonest Design, or Satanical Delusion.

The Practices of the Primitive Christians were some Permanent, to continue in the Church; others Temporary, and Alterable, according as there might be occasion, for Order, Decency, and Edification, and did vary from the beginning in several Churches and parts of the World; whereas the others were truly Catholick, according to *Vincentius Lirinensis* his Rule, *that is*, universally observed without any known beginning since the Apostles.

The *Spirit of God* was *poured forth upon all Flesh*, when the Gospel was Preached to all Flesh, or to every Creature, *that is*, not only to the *Jews*, but to the *Gentiles* also. But as to individual Persons, it was never so poured out

upon all Flesh, but there were some things pre-acquired; as *Faith in Christ Jesus*, and *ordinarily Baptism with Water*, *Obedience*, and *Prayer*, &c. Nor was *the Manifestation thereof* ever given to every one; but to every one to whom it was given, it was given to profit withall.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God: and, *If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. 8. 14, & 9. But it is to be known and remembred, that a great and principal, and the most certain Leading of the Spirit of God is not sensible, or easily perceivable how it comes; but it is generally a Secret Illumination of the Mind to perceive the Excellence of the things of God, and the Emptiness and Deceitfulness of the things of the World; from which proceeds an Appetite to those, and an Indifference to these; and in particular actions a like secret Illumination of the Mind, to apply the general Rules of the Scriptures to the particular Sense, and an Inclination of the Will to what is so perceived to be the Will of God. And in more sensible Motions, Impressions, and Openings, as some call them, the *Tryal* is by their Agreement with what is agreed to proceed from the Spirit of God; *that is*, the *Holy Scriptures*; what is contrary to that is to be rejected, as coming from the Enemy: what is not inconsistent with that ought to be followed; or if doubtful, be referred

to

to the Judgment and Determination of the Elders, according to the Obſervations of the Ancients; or of the moſt Experienced Chriſtians, eſpecially of ſuch as by their Office and Place are authorized, and obliged to be *Guides of Souls*. And thoſe who have preſumed to reject theſe Ordinary Means, which God hath appointed, and eſtabliſhed in his Church, have frequently fallen into Miſchief.

There are many of the Mind of *Simon Magus*, Act. 8. 18. they are deſirous to purchaſe it, but not at the Price our Saviour ſet it, *Mat.* 13. 44, 46. And there are many falſe counterfeit Spirits, very officious to offer themſelves where they find hopes of Reception; and they always ſuggeſt and inſtigate to the following of their Leading, which is inſenſibly, and as they find their Followers diſpoſed, from the Holy Scriptures, and from Chriſt; and when they cannot prevail with them in that manner, they endeavour to fill them with Spiritual Pride and Conceitedneſs, make them admired by others, as extraordinary and very Holy Perſons, that they may make them think better of themſelves than they ought, and ſo get advantage of them that way. And there are generally two great Faults committed by moſt Pretenders to the Guidance of the Spirit. 1. They do not well conſider themſelves, and teach others the neceſſary Qualifications pre-acquired for the obtaining of ſo great a Divine Favour.

2. They neither consider nor teach others the necessary Cautions and Directions for Tryal of Spirits. In general the Conscientious Observation of the Holy Scriptures, is a principal thing for both. For as the Law was our School-Master to bring us to Christ, so the Conscientious Observation of the externally revealed Will of God, which is Obedience, is our School-Master to prepare us for, and bring us to the true Spirit of God. But for more particular *Cautions* and *Directions*, that is a Subject too large for this Occasion, and hath been largely treated of by others.

The *Questions* concerning *Baptism with Water*, and *the Eucharist or Holy Communion*, are even such as that of *Naaman*, 2 Kin. 5. 11, 12. But they who make them are not like the Servants of that Heathen, who gave him this prudent Admonition: *If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather when he saith unto thee, Wash and be clean?* May they at least take Example from that Heathen, who received the Admonition even from his Servants, even with the like blessed Success. And this, with what I have said before, is as much as I apprehend necessary to be said to the *Questions*, for such serious considerate Persons, as are willing to be satisfied and informed of the Truth: and I shall be ready to give them all further Satisfaction, when I understand where any real Scruple doth remain.

THE

THE REVIEW.

WHAT I have written, I have written with all Plainness and Simplicity, with all Candor and Impartiality, and Good Will to all; without any other Design than for the Service of God, and the Good of all; and without any Affectation of any Ornament, as becomes the Majesty of the Truths of God: Yet can I not expect but I must incurr the Censures of most in one thing or other, when I consider the general Corruption of Mens Minds and Judgments, as well as of their Manners, at this time; not only of the Scandalous and Prophane, or Hypocritical Professors; but even of such as are sincere in many things, and deservedly esteemed in the World both for Parts and Honesty; and yet in others, not so compleat as might be wished, partly through the *Byaß of their own Dispositions*, and partly through the *Common Cheat of Honourable Names*; such as *Prudence*, *Moderation*, *Discretion*, *Charity*, &c.

&c. and their Contraries, calling Good, Evil; and Evil, Good; and partly through certain *False Notions*, undermining the Integrity of the Evangelical Doctrine of Christ, as the *Pharisees* did the Law of *Moses*, and rendring it of none Effect in many things; which have been *introduced and recommended* to the World, by *a late Sect* appearing in a very plausible Form, but, in truth, generated by an unnatural Copulation of *Church of England* with some *Socinian Principles*, setting up their own *Corrupt Humane Reason* in the place of the *Divine Wisdom*, and wresting the divinely inspired *Scriptures* to a Compliance with it; perswading themselves and others that the Noble Heroick Virtues, so much studied and practised by the ancient Christians, such as *Humility*, *Contempt of the World*, *Heavenly-mindedness*, &c. were for times of Persecution; but we are under another Dispensation; as I my self have been told by a Principal Author and Promoter of it; and encouraging such *Temporizing Compliances*, under the specious Pretences of *Moderation* and *Prudence*, as are not only Inlets to Sin, and Hindrances of Graces, but inconsistent with the Practices and Sentiments of the best Christians of all Ages, with the Doctrines and Instructions of the Apostles, the Example and Precepts of our Saviour himself, (to say nothing of Evangelical Counsels in this Age) our Baptismal

Engage-

Engagements, and the Genuine Spirit of Christianity, and the Interest of the Kingdom of Christ in this World. What Glosses they make upon our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount, I must leave to others better acquainted with them, to consider. But, What can be expected from persons so levened, but as severe Censures of this Writing as they take this to be of others? but that reasonable Expressions of just Indignation at Abuses and Corruptions in Matters of Religion, or at abuse of Scriptures to patronize Vanity, and by persons professing Religion, should be censured for *Passion*? but that such warm Expressions and Charges, as were necessary to awaken such out of a Deadly Slumber, as Experience had proved, could not be moved by gentler touches, should be censured as *Uncharitableness*? and necessary plain Dealing with Mortals, for the Service of God, the Good of a Country, and the Salvation of Souls, be censured as *Indiscretion*, *Disrespect to Superiors*, and *Saucineß*?

But to leave such as are ready to *wish*, and to *talk*, but will *do* nothing but what may serve to recommend themselves to those whose Commendations are most desirable; are willing to use others, as the Cats foot, but will not touch the Work with one of their Fingers; nor intermit the complement of a Dinner to consult of what themselves profess to be matter of great Im-

Importance; whose Prudence prefers to countenance Religion with Perukes, and Laces, and Topknots, and Servants in Livery, rather than to bear the Reproach of Christ, in bearing Testimony against the Vanities of the Age, by the tacit Reproof of them in a decent but plain and a little unfashionable Attire; who preferr Charity at home, in providing for the temporal concerns of themselves and their Families, with some little creditable Acts of Charity, as we call it, before trusting to Providence in more liberal Contributions to unfashionable Good Works: to leave such, I say, and to come close to the business, to *the State of the Church*, (of which I am yet a Member, and am not satisfied to separate while I live in the Nation, notwithstanding all I dislike in it) for this is the Root of all, and principally to be considered; and they are to take care of the Dissenters: If we consider the Great things belonging to the *Charge* of the Governours of this Church, both *severally* in their particular Dioceses, the State of the Clergy and People there; and *joyntly* to them all as one Body, *viz.* The *Court*, and the *Nobility*; The *Universities*; The *Parliament*, so far as Religion is concerned there; The *Prisons*, (which might be made Schools of Virtue, but are now Nurseries of all Vice and Wickedness) and *Condemned Persons* there; (for whose Assistance they of the *Roman* Communion imploy the

ablest

ableſt and beſt qualified of their Clergy, and we the moſt ordinary, though they are not a few, who are every Year Executed in this City, and throughout the Nation; The *Foreign Plantations*, and the *Propagation of the Chriſtian Religion* by that Means abroad; for our Neglect of which the *Monks*, and *Jeſuits*, and *Quakers*, and ſuch as we call *Phanaticks*, will riſe up in Judgment againſt them; and the *Diſſenters* at home; for they alſo belong to their Care, to remove all juſt Occaſions, give all reaſonable Satisfaction, and to uſe all truly Chriſtian Means to reduce them: If all theſe, beſides divers others, which cannot preſently be thought on, be conſidered, What Account can be given that may reaſonably paſs with a conſiderate Mortal Man, of any of theſe? and, What Account then can be given of all to the Immortal, All-ſeeing, Righteous God.

Theſe are *Generals*, of each of which a particular and clear Account muſt be given by every one of that Order, what ſenſe he hath had of his Duty in that reſpect, and what Care and Endeavours he hath uſed in diſcharge thereof? To theſe I will add but one or two *Particulars*, of Occurrences in this Reign: One, of *a Bill for Suppreſſion of Vice and Debauchery*, drawn indeed at their Requeſt; but after it had been peruſed and perfected, not only by able Counſel, but by all the Judges then in Town, particularly

larly the Lord Chief Justice *Polexfen*, the Lord Chief Baron *Atkyns*, Mr. Justice *Dolbin*, Baron *Letchmare*, and I think one or two more, and fair written out put into their hands, and a Motion made by the Bishop of *Chester* to bring it into the House, and granted by the Lords, and yet stifled and suppressed in their hands. Another, *a Needful and Hopeful Reformation*, begun by the Authority and Encouragement of the QUEEN, and not only vigorously prosecuted here in *Middlesex*, but in a hopeful way in many other Cities and Counties all over the Nation, and this stopped first by a Combination of *Middlesex* Justices, (I need say no more) but at last more effectually in a Judicature of Equity, in the Presence of no less than seven of our Reverend Prelates, by two wicked Men, the one Speaker, and the other a Member of Parliament, the * Justice of the Peace, who had been most diligent, and other persons concerned in the Promotion of that Good Work, checked, vilified, and abused, without any just cause, to the discouragement of the Execution of the Laws, and Contempt of Her Majesty's Authority; and all in the Presence of those Bishops, who came on purpose to countenance the Cause of Reformation, were satisfied of the Iniquity of

* *Mr.* Ralph Hartley, *who is still a Sufferer between a Succession of City Magistrates, and a Combination of* Surry *Justices, and some other persons, and shamefully oppressed by them.*

f the Proceedings againſt it, and yet not one them ever appeared after in it, to any purſe more than in one little printed Diſcourſe Vindication of the Gentleman ſo abuſed, as foreſaid. And what Account can be given of eſe things?

It is a great Truth, *That neither King, nor Parliament, nor Biſhops*, of themſelves and their wn Motion, *have done any one Act*, that I now of, *worthy of the Name of Chriſtian.* And here lyeth the Fault of all this, but at their oor, who, inſtead of Admoniſhing, and Exiting, and Animating to due Returns of true Gratitude in Fact to God, for his admirable Proidence, have, by their Neglect, and the conſequences of it, provoked the Favours of Providence to withdraw, and to leave us to our ſelves, and to eat the Fruit of our own doings? And whence comes this Neglect of ſo many ſo obliged, but from a common Defect of Good Education at the Univerſities, and the Enchantment of their Preferments?

But is not this Great Uncharitableneſs, may our Grave Prudential Gentlemen ſay, thus to lay open to the World the Nakedneſs of our Governours, and of the Church? Doubtleſs as great as for a Phyſician to preſcribe a bitter Potion to a tender Patient; or a Chirurgeon to cut or burn, after tryal of more gentle means, what is found otherwiſe incurable. It is that they,

they, at whose door lyeth the Root of all Evil, may give Glory to God, by owning it to themselves, and giving Good Example of *Humiliation* and *Reformation* to others. But they will not, I hope the deluded *Quakers* will be so wise, as to accept the Honour of beginning the Example. For *all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.*

But, Who call'd *You* to this Office? may the Prudentialists say: *By what Authority doest Thou this?* and, *Who gave Thee this Authority?* who gave me Eyes to see, and a Heart to be sensible of it, and a Mind to be Faithful to Him? Who call'd me and led me, by his Hand, to this Holy Service, not for filthy Lucre's sake, nor to make a Trade of it; not to seek the Worship in the Church, but to serve Him in the Service of all Men, in the best manner I can.

FINIS.